

Frederick County Ethics Commission
Minutes for the Public Meeting of Tuesday, December 13, 2005

Present: G. Anthony Crook, Chairman
Ronald W. Peppe, Alternate Commission Member
Linda B. Thall, Assistant County Attorney

Absent: Phillip P. Killam, Commission Member
Andrew T. Jones, Commission Member

The Frederick County Ethics Commission met at 7:00 p.m. on December 13, 2005, at the Office of the County Attorney on the 3rd floor of Winchester Hall, 12 East Church Street, Frederick, Maryland 21701.

Unfinished Business

Approval of the minutes – The Commission considered the minutes from its August 15, 2005, meeting.

MOTION: Mr. Peppe made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Crook seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Review of financial disclosure forms – The Commission members reviewed additional financial disclosure forms received since the Commission's last meeting. There is one remaining financial disclosure form due.

MOTION: Mr. Peppe made a motion to ask the Assistant County Attorney to prepare a letter to the individual who has not filed his financial disclosure form giving that individual a deadline of 30 days to file his form or notify the Ethics Commission of his intentions.

Lobbying reform ordinance – The Assistant County Attorney briefed the Commission members on the status of the lobbying reform ordinance pending before the Board of County Commissioners. This briefing included a discussion of the Board of County Commissioner's interest in the Commission's procedures. The Board of County Commissioners is scheduled to vote on the ordinance on December 20. Information regarding the Commission's procedures should be provided prior to that date.

MOTION: Mr. Peppe moved to have the Commission send a letter to the Board of County Commissioners providing copies of the conflict of interest guidelines and the current standard operating procedures. The letter should include a reference to the remedies available to the Ethics Commission and the Commission's desire to handle complaints through the issuance of Advisory Opinions. The letter should also invite the Board of County Commissioners to provide suggestions on the

guidelines and procedures, as they are currently under review by the Commission. Mr. Crook seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

New Business

Notice of potential conflict of interest – The Commission received a letter from the director of a County Government division advising the Commission of a potential conflict of interest and the steps taken to minimize any future potential conflict of interest.

MOTION: Mr. Peppe moved to have the Commission send a letter to the division director thanking the director for providing the notice in compliance with the Ethics Ordinance. Mr. Crook seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Request for an advisory opinion – The Commission received a request for an Advisory Opinion from a member of the Board of County Commissioners. The Commissioner requested guidance on whether the Ethics Ordinance prohibits a Commissioner who initiates a proposal for an amendment to the Forest Resource Ordinance from charging any applicable fees and costs associated with filing and processing the proposed amendment to the Commissioner's individual expense account. The Commission members discussed the response to this opinion request.

MOTION: Mr. Peppe moved to have the Assistant County Attorney draft an Advisory Opinion consistent with the guidance provided during the discussion. Mr. Crook seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Unfinished Business

Standard Operating Procedure revision – Mr. Crook noted an error in the draft procedure's background description of the process for removal of a Commission member. The Assistant County Attorney will make the necessary revision.

Adjournment

MOTION: Mr. Peppe moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Crook seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

The Ethics Commission adjourned its meeting at 7:50 p.m.

/s/
Linda B. Thall, Assistant County Attorney